

Testimony on House Bill 5408

To the Energy Committee,

I feel strongly that the following language regarding trees should be included in the bill:

1. Biannual review and evaluation of the plan, including public comment, to allow for adjustments as needed
2. Require utilities to obtain written consent from property owners for removal of trees on private property
3. Improve the definitions of what is a hazardous tree and require each tree to be assessed by utilizing the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) *Basic Tree Risk Assessment Form* or similar industry-wide system.
4. Require utilities to plant a replacement tree for every tree removed
5. Require utilities to grind stumps of removed trees
6. Require that utilities provide a direct phone line to a customer service representative assigned to handle questions on (and/or objections to) tree trimming and removal
7. Create greater accountability of tree service contractors through the requirement of a performance bond
8. Allow a Town or municipalities Tree Warden to have final say to a trees fate, based not only on potential hazards, but also to the importance of or historical presence of any given tree in any given neighborhood.

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